

# **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**2 VAC 5-160-10 through 2 VAC 5-160-90**

(Previously VR 115-02-14)

Governing the

## **TRANSPORTATION OF HORSES**

Virginia Department of Agriculture  
and Consumer Services

**DIVISION OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY SERVICES**

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## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **Governing the Transportation of Horses** (Previously VR 115-02-14)

Promulgated Pursuant to

Section 3.1-796.67

of the

Code of Virginia of 1950

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## REGULATIONS 2 VAC 5-160-10 through 2 VAC 5-160-90

### Governing the TRANSPORTATION OF HORSES

Pursuant to the authority in Sections 3.1-796.67 of the Code of Virginia (1950) as amended, the Board of Agriculture and Consumer Services hereby adopts the following Rules and Regulations Governing the Transportation of Horses.

#### **2 VAC 5-160-10. Definitions.**

The following words and terms, when used in these regulations, shall have the following meaning, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

*“Carrier”* means the operator of any airline, railroad, motor carrier, shipping line, or other enterprise which, for hire, is engaged in the business of transporting any animal.

*“Foal”* means any horse suckling its dam.

*“Horse”* means those members of the genus *Equus*, including *Equus caballus*, asses, mules and hinnies.

*“Pony”* means a small horse standing 14.2 hands or less.

*“Stallion”* means an uncastrated male horse.

*“Vehicle”* means any machine, tractor, trailer, semi-trailer, or any combination thereof propelled or drawn by mechanical power and used upon the highways in the transportation of property.

#### **2 VAC 5-160-20. Application of regulations.**

The provisions of this regulation shall apply to loads of more than six horses being transported to a commercial slaughter facility in a vehicle.

#### **2 VAC 5-160-30. Vehicles.**

Vehicles transporting horses as set forth in 2 VAC 5-160-20 of this regulation shall:

1. Be designed and constructed so that they can:
  - a. Be cleaned and disinfected,
  - b. Withstand the action of the weather, and
  - c. Withstand the weight of any horse which may be thrown against them;
2. Have more than one tier holding horses only if the tier is designed, constructed, and maintained to withstand the weight of the horses held by it;
3. Provide a minimum distance of 12 inches between the withers of each horse and the roof, provided that the minimum distance should only apply in so far as it permits every horse being transported to stand in its natural position;
4. Have rigid sides and suitable overhead protection;
5. Have at least two doorways for animal ingress and egress that:
  - a. Shall be on different sides of the vehicle,
  - b. Allow a minimum of 12 inches above the withers, and
  - c. Allow the largest horse to pass through without injury;
6. Be designed, constructed and maintained to ensure adequate and suitable ventilation for each horse;
7. Be equipped with permanently fitted shields that fully cover the projection of the wheel arches into the

- interior of the vehicle and prevent injury to horses;
8. Be free from any sharp edges or projections in the vehicle interior;
  9. Protect all electrical fittings and wiring to prevent any horse from contact with them;
  10. Be provided with a means of artificial lighting, fixed or portable, and capable of illuminating the interior to facilitate proper horse care;
  11. Be designed to facilitate the inspection of the interior of the vehicle from the outside;
  12. Have floors which, to ensure horses a proper foothold, are:
    - a. Covered with nonskid rubber or other material secured to the floor,
    - b. Constructed with metal grade floors with dull surfaces, or
    - c. Strewn with adequate amounts of sand or other nonskid substances;
  13. Be provided with sufficient tying points when transporting horses which need to be secured; and
  14. Have partitions:
    - a. As necessary to separate horses named in 2 VAC 5-160-80 of this regulation and to comply with paragraph 4 of 2 VAC 5-160-60 of this regulation,
    - b. Constructed and maintained to withstand the weight of any horse which may be thrown against them,
    - c. Constructed to ensure that any gap which is left between the lower end of the partition and the vehicle floor will not result in injury to the limb of any horses, and
    - d. Of a height of at least 50 inches.

**2 VAC 5-160-40. Loading and unloading.**

Horses shall be loaded and unloaded in a vehicle such that:

1. A ramp, fitted or strewn with a nonskid material, shall be provided if the vertical distance from the trailer to the loading platform is greater than 15 inches;
2. No horse is caused injury or suffering by:
  - a. The excessive use of any device for driving horses, or
  - b. Contact with any part of the vehicle or accessory carried within;
3. Horses shall be tied as necessary;
4. In vehicles containing more than one tier, the weight of the horses upon the tier shall not be greater than the amount of weight the tier can support;
5. No untied horse, other than a mare with foal, shall be carried in the same compartment with any tied animal;
6. Each horse is adequately supported against the motion of the vehicle; and
7. Each group of horses set forth in 2 VAC 5-160-80 of this regulation shall be separated from every other group by means of a partition.

**2 VAC 5-160-50. Cleaning and disinfection.**

All vehicles shall be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each use.

**2 VAC 5-160-60. Protection during transport.**

To ensure the well-being of the horses transported under the provisions of this regulation:

1. No horse shall be caused suffering owing to exposure to the weather,
2. Each horse shall have an adequate supply of fresh air,
3. The driver or an attendant shall be responsible for proper care, feeding and watering of the horses, and
4. A partition shall be placed, without causing overcrowding, to ensure that horses are not thrown about when the number of horses carried is less than the number which could be accommodated.

**2 VAC 5-160-70. Food, water and exercise .**

In transit, any horse subject to these regulations shall be:

1. Offered potable water at least every 24 hours,
2. Fed every 24 hours, and
3. Unloaded and exercised every 24 hours.

**2 VAC 5-160-80. Grouping of horses for transport.**

Horses shall be grouped such that:

1. Each individual horse of the following categories shall have a separate stall during transport:
  - a. An injured or physically disabled horse,
  - b. A stallion, unless sedated,
  - c. An aggressive horse, and
  - d. A mare in season;
2. Each mare with a foal at foot shall travel with that foal, but separated from all other animals; and
3. Except for those horses listed in 2 VAC 5-160-80 of this regulation, a horse belonging to a specific group below may travel with others of that same group, but separate from all other groups;
  - a. Foals of any description under nine months of age,
  - b. Horses and ponies over nine months of age and standing less than 15 hands high (less than 60 inches to the withers),
  - c. Horses and ponies over nine months of age and standing 15 hands or taller (60 inches or greater to the withers).

**2 VAC 5-160-90. Injured or physically disabled horses.**

Injured or physically disabled horses shall be protected by the following:

1. No horse which is injured or disabled shall be permitted by its owner or his agent, or by the consignor, carrier, or other person in charge of the horse, to be transported or, where a journey has commenced, to be further transported if by reason of its unfitness, the horse is likely to be subjected to additional suffering;
2. No horse likely to give birth in the course of a proposed journey shall be permitted by its owner or his agent, or by the consignor, carrier or other person in charge of the horse to undertake that journey;
3. The person in charge of a horse which becomes unfit in the course of a journey shall ensure that it is not transported for a period longer than is necessary to transport it to the nearest available place at which it can receive veterinary medical attention; and
4. Special care shall be taken when loading injured or physically disabled horses to prevent additional suffering.